

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALEXAN 00381 230644Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SSM-03 HA-05 COME-00 EB-08
LAB-04 SIL-01 /100 W
-----084545 230648Z /17

P 221145Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1747
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALEXANDRIA 0381

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EG
SUBJ: REFERENDUM VOTING IN ALEXANDRIA

REF: CAIRO 12917

1. VOTING ON THE REFERENDUM ON SADAT'S SIX PRINCIPLES FOR SAFE-
GUARDING DEMOCRACY TOOK PLACE IN ORDERLY FASHION ON SUNDAY, MAY 21.
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SEVERAL LARGE BANNERS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF
TOWN, LIFE APPEARED TO GO ON IN NORMAL FASHION. INTEREST DID NOT
APPEAR TO BE VERY KEEN; WE GUESSTIMATE ONLY A HALF OR LESS OF
THE PEOPLE VOTED.

2. ALTHOUGH THE PRINCIPAL REASON FOR APATHY WAS PROBABLY THAT
PEOPLE CONSIDERED THE RESULT A FOREGONE CONCLUSION, ANOTHER REASON
MAY HAVE BEEN LESS THAN WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT OF ALL OF SADAT'S
"SIX PRINCIPLES." VOTERS WERE GIVEN NO CHOICE EXCEPT TO ACCEPT
OR REJECT ALL OF THEM -- MANY FELT THAT SOME STEPS THAT THE
PRESIDENT CALLED FOR WERE WARRANTED, WHEREAS OTHERS (E.G. AGAINST
THOSE CONVICTED BY REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNALS) WERE NOT.

3. MANY LOCAL CONTACTS FEEL THAT SADAT'S REFERENDUM MOVE WAS
CAUSED BY A REACTION TO ATTACKS ON HIM OR ON THOSE SO CLOSE TO
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PAGE 02 ALEXAN 00381 230644Z

HIM AS TO AMOUNT TO THE SAME THING (E.G. OSMAN AHMAD OSMAN,
MARAI, ETC.)

4. NEVERTHELESS, GENERAL CONCENSUS HERE SEEMS TO BE IN SYM-
PATHY WITH WHAT SADAT IS TRYING TO DO. PEOPLE RECALL DAYS OF
NASSER WHEN LIBERTIES SEVERELY RESTRICTED AND THEY TEND TO SEE
SADAT'S STEPS AS DESIGNED TO CURTAIL "COMMUNISTS" AND THUS

PRESERVE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES FOR OTHERS, AS WELL AS KEEPING
POLITICS IN A MODERATE VEIN SO THAT BUSINESS AND NORMAL LIFE
MAY CONTINUE WITHOUT UPHEAVAL.
MCCLELLAND

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